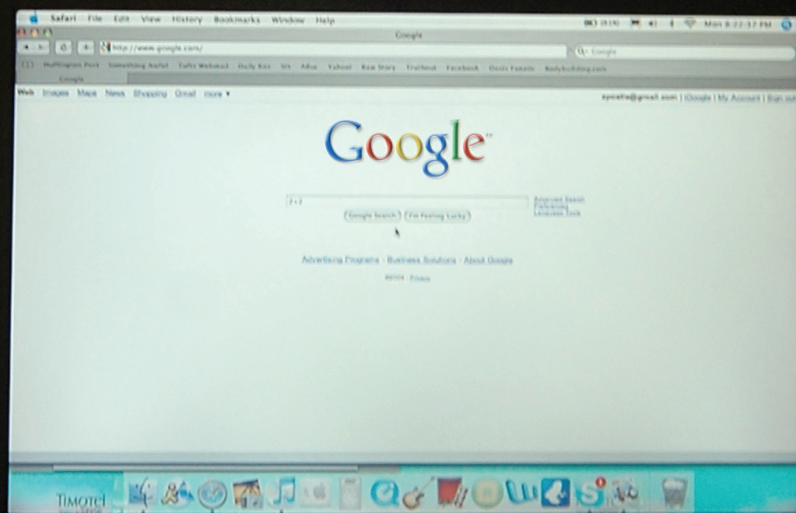


# TUFTS OBSERVER

TUFTS' STUDENT MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 16, 2009



## Your Brain On Google: The Dark Side of Information Technology

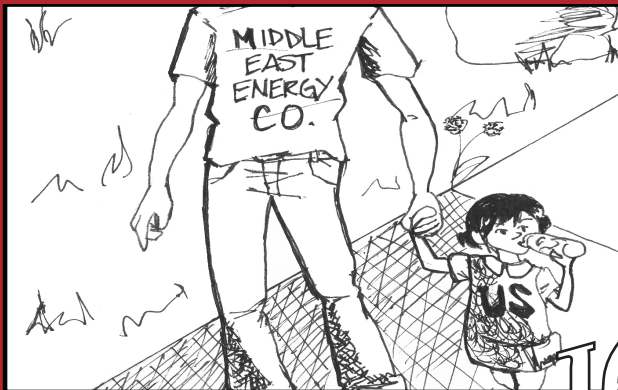
ALSO Huffing and Puffing Over Phelps | Slumdog's Voyeuristic Side

# Featured Articles



NEWS | Desensitizing poverty in the media *Slumdog Millionaire* accused of exploiting poverty

5



OPINION  
Save the Environment: Reduce our Dependency

16



ARTS AND CULTURE  
Nothing wrong with a little dress up

18



EXCURSIONS  
Porter Square Excursions

21



POETRY AND PROSE  
"German Chocolate Layer Cake," a poem

23

The Observer has been Tufts' weekly publication of record since 1895. Our dedication to in-depth reporting, journalistic innovation, and honest dialogue has remained intact for over a century. Today, we offer insightful news analysis, cogent and diverse opinion pieces, and lively reviews of current arts, entertainment, and sports. Through poignant writing and artistic elegance, we aim to entertain, inform, and above all challenge the Tufts community to affect positive change.



## Editors and Leadership

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Mike Snyder

### MANAGING EDITORS

Marysa Lin

Daniel Rosen

### NEWS EDITORS

Julia Ivanova

Caitlin Schwartz

### OPINION EDITORS

Crystal Bui

Alexandra Siegel

### ARTS EDITORS

Lauren Mazel

Will Ramsdell

### EXCURSIONS EDITOR

Katie Christiansen

### CAMPUS EDITOR AND ART DIRECTOR

Ryan Stolp

### POETRY AND PROSE EDITORS

Michael Goetzman

Micah Hauser

### PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Campbell Kliefoth

### WEBMASTER

Matthew Koulouris

### CHIEF COPY EDITOR

Kristen Barone

### LAYOUT DIRECTORS

Karen Andres

Joshua Aschheim

### BUSINESS MANAGERS

Nathaniel Jonnes

Marcelo Norsworthy

### EDITOR EMERITUS

Patrick Roath

## Staff

Kathleen Boland

Matthew Diamante

Avery Matera

## Contents

February 16, 2009

Volume CXVIII, Issue 2

The *Observer*, Since 1895

www.TuftsObserver.org

### Feature

- 2 A Web of Knowledge?: Google, the Internet, and the Brain, *by Mike Snyder*

### News

- 5 Playing Poverty?, *by Marysa Lin*  
6 Many Goals, One Aspiration: Peace in the Middle East, *by Ariana Siegel*  
8 Malaria Terror: Scientists Battle a Tenacious Parasite, *by Cara Paley*

### Opinion

- 10 Sound Off! Phelps's Pot Predicament, *by Various Contributors*  
15 Careful When You Crank, *by Crystal Bui*  
16 Save the Environment: Reduce Our Dependency, *by Jimmy Pianka*

### Arts

- 17 The Power of the Posthumous Oscar, *by Jordan Teicher*  
18 Debauchery in Disguise, *by Alyce Currier*  
18 Platnum; Love Shy in NYC, *by the Arts Editors*  
19 Going Green: The Alterative Culture Column, *by Reggie Hubbard*

### Excursions

- 20 Bite-Sized Reviews: Porter Square, *by Chelsea Brown and Hannah Freeland*  
22 Montreal: Clubs, Bars, and Pints, *by Katie Christiansen*

### Poetry and Prose

- 23 German Chocolate Cake, *by Roxie Salamon-Abrams*

### Extras

- 9 An Introduction from the Public Editor, *by Jeremy White*  
18 The Adventures of Petey & Chuck: A Comic Strip, *by Ryan Stolp*  
24 Campus, *by Ryan Stolp*

## Contributors

Chelsea Brown

James Choca

Alyce Currier

Hannah Freeman

Chizorom Izeogu

Aalok Kanani

Cara Paley

Jimmy Pianka

Jordan Teicher

Roxie Salamon-Abrams

Jeremy White

Since  
1895

# A WEB OF KNOWLEDGE?

## GOOGLE, THE INTERNET, AND THE BRAIN

BY MIKE SNYDER

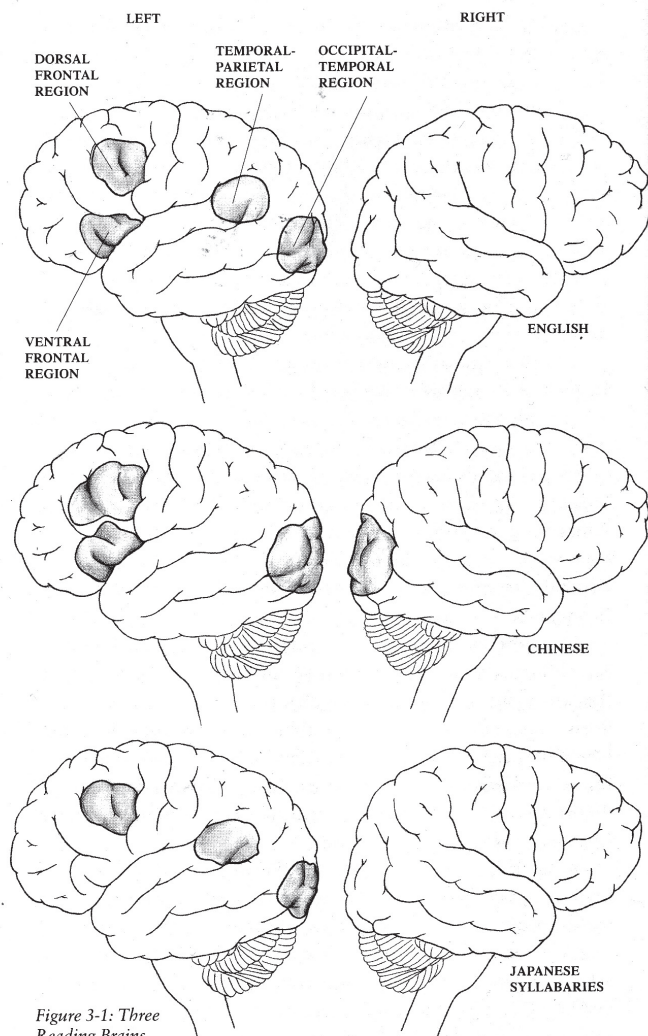


Figure 3-1: Three Reading Brains

Few would dispute that the internet has transformed the academic world. Research that used to take weeks to gather in libraries and periodicals can now be accessed with a few clicks on Wikipedia. Communication with professors and classmates is as simple as checking one's Blackberry. Without a doubt, the information age has led to the mass diffusion and easy accessibility of knowledge, information, and ideas. But is there a dark side to this information technology? What if the technologies that we rely on for accessibility might actually be making us slaves to indolence?

To Professor Maryanne Wolf of the Child Development department and an expert on the cognitive neurosciences, the danger is not just the stuff of science-fiction novels. Her extensive research at Tufts' Center for Reading and Language Research (CRLR) is raising some interesting questions about the mental well being of an entire generation growing up on Google. Specifically, her research looks at how reading influences the brain's cognitive development, and she uses the conclusions to speculate as to how our brains might operate in a culture where most reading occurs over the internet rather than through books.

Wolf has been prominently featured in the media from the *Atlantic* to the BBC, and although her research is primarily focused on children, her studies on the "reading brain" may also have implications in the everyday lives of college students.

#### YOUR BRAIN ON BOOKS

"How we read changes the brain," Professor Wolf explained. "I can show you [that] the Chinese reading brain is different from an English one, is different from a Hebrew one, is different from an Italian one." This basic concept—that how we read

is just as important as what we read—is the reason why online reading also changes the brain. In a sense, online reading can be considered a completely different language.

As opposed to past generations of college students who had no choice but to read books and other print-based materials, today's generation of undergraduates hop from Google link to Google link while also taking detours through Gmail, Wikipedia, and Facebook. Professor Wolf refers to this kind of internet usage as "cognitive lurching," a term aptly named to characterize the natural human instinct to go from one new thing to the next. As lurchers, we tend to skim internet articles for the sake of immediacy and instant gratification rather than truly engage ourselves. "If you think about it, [the internet] is really advantaging or rewarding immediacy. You want to get in there, read, and then you want to go elsewhere," she said. As information becomes increasingly condensed through RSS feeds, twitter, and blogs, users are encouraged to browse, skim, and "surf" the internet in order to accumulate information at unprecedented speeds.

"By nature of the online medium, you have what we call in neuroscience a set

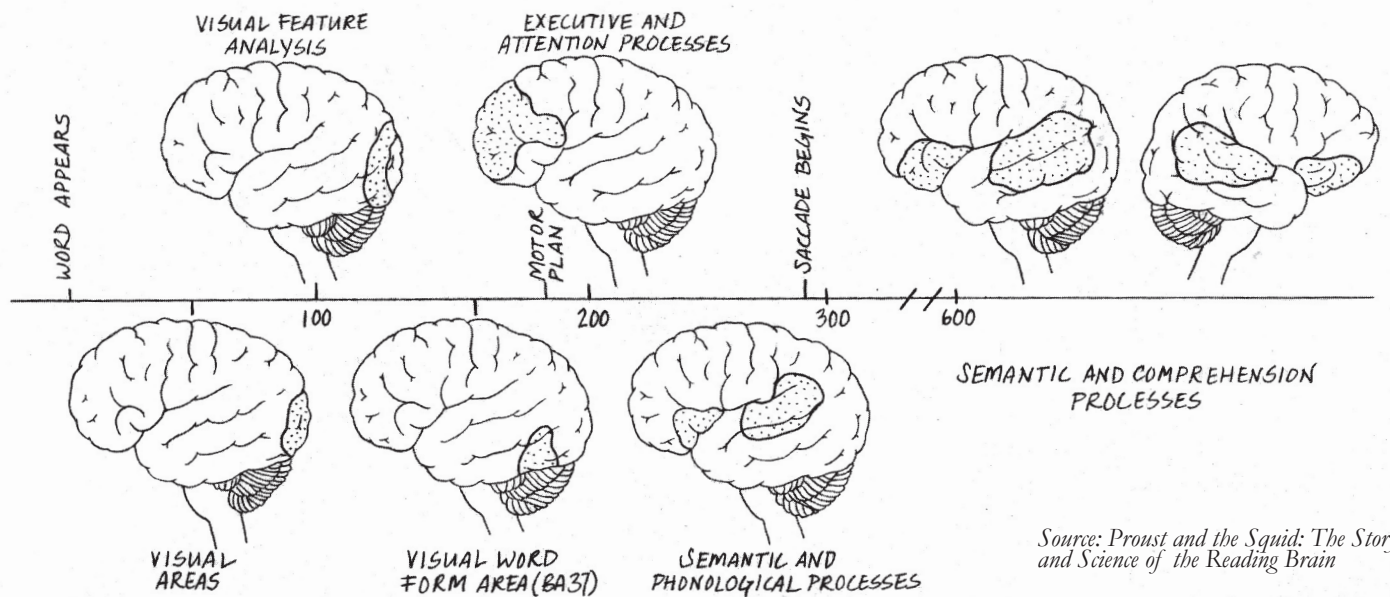
towards speed and efficiency, and that advantages getting it done. It disadvantages thinking slowly and carefully," remarked Professor Wolf. "Everything is efficiency... we're worshipping efficiency and speed at the cost of slower thought, and sometimes we need to stop and pause and appreciate."

Despite this, there is nothing inherently different about words on a page versus words on a computer screen. Reading *War and Peace* online can lead to the same level of understanding as reading *War and Peace* in the library. "There is no end to insight that can come in online reading," Professor Wolf explained. "I'm not opposed to online reading. There's nothing in my life that doesn't involve some aspect of online reading, some part of my day."

But how many Tufts students go online in order to read Tolstoy? The answer is not enough. Professor Wolf's concern with information technology is that many people will utilize the convenient, information-at-your-fingertips qualities of the internet as opposed to entering into a state of "deep reading." She outlines this idea in her critically acclaimed book *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain* by illustrating which specific pathways of the hu-



CAMPBELL KLIEFOTH



Source: Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain

A timeline for reading, in milliseconds. Other page: the brain's activity when reading in different languages

man brain become active during the reading process. When your brain is fully engaged in a text, its neuro pathways “light up” and your brain really works hard. It’s also in this state of deep reading that your brain achieves the kind of “probative,” “analytical,” and “synthetic” thinking that leads to original ideas, rich mental connections, and insight. As Professor Wolf put it, “Now you’re thinking for yourself.”

But instead of thinking for themselves, chronic internet users often end up extracting external information. Rather than sitting down with a great work of literature, getting absorbed in it, and using the analytical mind to gain personal meaning, it’s much more convenient to find someone else’s meaning on the web.

Although no formal research has yet to be conducted on the direct effects of the internet on the developing brain, Professor Wolf warned, “Here we have this unbelievable tool, but the tool itself may make us so cognitively lazy that we may actually be making less use of the deep reading processes...I think that one of the very important things is to fight cognitive sloth, and we have to do that from the very start.”

#### DEVELOPING RESISTANCE?

For the current generation of college students, whose brains have already developed the cognitive skills necessary to become “fluent, comprehending” readers, reading deeply is a matter of personal choice. But for young children with developing brains, excessive use of the internet

might have unknown effects. “If we are a little child who is only in some ways fed knowledge, rather than constructing knowledge, than my worry is that we’re going to have lazier minds.”

Wolf acknowledges that the brain can change, shape, and adapt, as it has throughout millennia to react to technological and cultural milestones, such as the invention of the Gutenberg Bible; her argument is one of formation, whereby children who rely on the internet for their answers may never cultivate the analytical skills that deep reading fosters. Her participation in the Tufts Literacy Corps underscores her commitment to ensuring that all children have a chance to enjoy the wonders of reading and become fluent readers. “Don’t lose that analytical mind, which we know has been nurtured in a very particular way for thousands of years,” Professor Wolf said. “Be very careful not to lose that as you add [technological] skills.”

But even among Tufts undergraduates, for whom Professor Wolf has the highest admiration, she has still noticed an increasing reliance on the internet when it comes to academics; by the same token, she observes that things that take time in general—such as reading poetry and spending time in nature—are on the decline in this country.

In order to help students filter the information overload, Wolf envisions that the university will serve a very different role in the future. Instead of merely providing students with more information to absorb and decode, the university should offer students a means to filter out, interpret, and critically

examine all the information that bombards them daily. “The classroom should help us analyze, synthesize, be a form of the elicitation of insight and discovery...so there will always be this guided elicitation and helping students aspire to the finest thought that they are capable of.”

As for those times when the computer culture is too much to handle, Professor Wolf recommends a good dose of reading books for pleasure and reexamining one’s priorities. “You’re never going to have a time where you can study your own life and try to have a framework for the rest of your life. You’re building a framework for thought,” she continued “We’ve never seen a bigger cultural transition since Socrates, and I would hope that your generation uses these years to examine how they think... to make sure they are not themselves [worshipping] efficiency over their own best thought.”

But, if the analytical mind does lose precedence over efficiency in the midst of this cultural transition, is it possible that the oral and literary knowledge we have accumulated since the birth of civilization will simply be reduced to online Cliff Notes, bite-sized Wikipedia entries, and other digestible forms?

It’s hard to say, but it might just be a risk not worth taking. “There’s no going back into the Aladdin’s lamp, nor should there be. We’re launched into the future. But by God, don’t be so stupid as to lose what you’ve been developing for 2000 years.” Now that’s something to think about. ☪

CC

# PLAYING POVERTY

BY MARYSA LIN

**S**lumdogg Millionaire, a movie that unexpectedly captured ten Oscar nominations including Best Picture, started out as an underdog film about an unlikely awards-show contestant. While it has picked up awards from the Writers Guild of America, the Golden Globes, and the Screen Actors Guild, the modern-day fairytale and its director Danny Boyle have attracted some pointed criticism.

In a January 14 column for the UK newspaper *The Times*, columnist Alice Miles accused Boyle's film of being "poverty porn" that "revels in the violence, degradation and horror" of the slums of Mumbai, India. Not only does she condemn *Slumdogg Millionaire's* content, Miles also attacks Western society's moral compass for allowing such work to qualify as entertainment. Thus far, opposition to the film has been relatively low-key compared to the high praise, but it has not been invisible.

Professor Julie Dobrow, Director of Tufts' Communications and Media Studies

Program, distinguishes between documentaries and films with a social agenda and "mass media" movies that generally don't have an outright agenda. "While some documentaries have done a great job of portraying aspects of violence and poverty, the truth is that most of them don't have very wide distribution."

In contrast, "a widely-distributed feature film will definitely be seen by a bigger audience." Does it matter if audiences in comfortable Western countries see images of impoverished India through a documentary instead of a highly-publicized film that has a fairytale-like story and pays homage to old Bollywood movies?

To Amahl Bishara, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, the problem is that "poverty is not often represented at all in popular media." This can mean a reduction of conversations and communication across class boundaries, making it even more difficult to tackle poverty in media. Bishara adds that the effect of popular media like the movie *Slumdogg Millionaire* does not necessarily lie in what the film does but instead in "how the media is taken up."

Dobrow and Bishara seem to agree that it is wholly unclear how depictions of slums or poverty in high-grossing blockbuster movies affect those who live in poverty and the reactions of audiences. As an example, Bishara wonders whether *Slumdogg* will encourage more tourism (and investment) in the Taj Mahal or whether the movie will encourage tourists to avoid young, unlicensed tour guides. "All these are questions with a lot of variables," she says.

Dobrow cites the Agenda Setting Theory when considering the consequences of poverty depictions in mainstream media. The theory suggests that media may not tell the audience what to think, but instead "they can tell us what to think about." So, while *Slumdogg* may not convince moviegoers to sympathize or become desensitized to Mumbai's poverty, it might put poverty on the "agendas" of Westerners that see the movie.

In all seriousness, *Slumdogg Millionaire* does not intend to be or market itself as a

film of social change. It is part fairytale, part love story and aims to pay tribute to old Bollywood classics. In fact, *Slumdogg Millionaire* writer Simon Beaufoy quoted director Danny Boyle as saying "It's got to be Romeo and Juliet, otherwise, what's the point?" Given that the movie does not make itself out to be an accurate representation of real life in the slums, does it really matter that the expansive, colorful shots of Mumbai set to M.I.A. songs aestheticize dire poverty?

With the 81st Academy Awards coming up on February 22, 2009, issues regarding *Slumdogg's* treatment of poverty have become more pervasive. Aside from accusations that Boyle aestheticizes Indian poverty for the delight of Western audiences, protesters also take issue with the term "slumdogg" and the post-production treatment of child actors recruited from the slums to act in the film.

The term "slumdogg" was created by screenwriter Beaufoy while adapting the book *Q&A* into a screenplay. Slum residents have protested and even sued to have the title of the film changed. Some high-profile Indian voices, like actors Irrfan Khan (who played the policeman questioning the main character), actor Anil Kapoor (who played the gameshow host), and Indian television channel NDTV have come to the defense of *Slumdogg Millionaire*.

Perhaps ironically, those who might be most offended by the movies are slum residents themselves, who will most likely never see the film. "It is always difficult to determine the 'effect' of any particular media," said Bishara. Ultimately, the effects of *Slumdogg Millionaire* could very well swing either way. Nevertheless, it is sure to attract endless criticism as providing an inadequate or inaccurate picture of Mumbai. The natural response to that, however, is whether any movie crafted for entertainment value can hope to capture accurately an enormous society and city. ☉



CAMBELL KLIEFOTH

# MANY GOALS, ONE ASPIRATION

## TUFTS TALKS PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

BY ARIANA SIEGEL

The Crane Room is separated from the rest of Paige Hall by a small doorway with an “emergency exit only” sign. The room is embraced by wood paneled walls and boasts what appears to be a very high ceiling, giving off as much of an air of grandeur as can be achieved in a place labeled “classroom.” Here, in this oasis of calm and prestige, took place a momentous conversation at Tufts University on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009 amongst student members of the Arab and Jewish communities at Tufts.

The interfaith student organization Pathways hosted the gathering imparting personal accounts of a conflict often only understood through assorted headlines. The New Initiative for Middle East Peace (NIMEP), Arab Students Association (ASA), Tufts Friends of Israel, Muslim Students Association, and Tufts Hillel cosponsored the event. Students with various per-

spectives on both sides of the conflict were invited to speak about their experiences to a small audience of peers in the Crane Room.

The conversation began with Shai Fuxman, a Brandeis University alumni affiliated with Pathways, an organization which “aims to promote tolerance and understanding across religious and cultural groups across campus,” according to its website. He said the initiative to create a setting for dialogue arose from a concern that the conflict abroad would polarize students, as it has done on other campuses. Instead of arguing in classrooms and dining halls, Pathways hopes to set a positive, proactive tone to conversations by allowing people with many different perspectives a fair chance to share their views. This particular dialogue was one of a series of events held to generate dialogue and air opinions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including a debate-style dialogue held the previous Wednesday mod-

erated by Professor of International Relations Malik Mufti.

The first speaker was Eyal Amit, a senior at Tufts who was born and raised in Israel. As an Israeli citizen, Amit had to serve in the Army at age 18 and fought in the Israeli-Lebanese war. During part of his service, Amit was stationed at a checkpoint outside of the West Bank. He was not particularly fond of this job but dutifully performed his position. On one particularly miserable, rainy day when the line at the check point was hours long, a older Palestinian man approached him and asked why there was a checkpoint in his small, peaceful town. Amit was caught off-guard by the question and answered truthfully: he didn’t know. The Palestinian man lamented that just as it only takes one bit of dirt to ruin otherwise drinkable water, it only takes one act of violence to change the situation of an entire town.

Junior Marwan Al Ju’beh also lent his voice to the dialogue. Al Ju’Beh was born in Jordan but has lived in Palestinian territories and has a Palestinian ID. To him, the world of Palestinians is completely different from any other, one in which children play with toy guns and violence is so common that it often goes without remark. Al Ju’Beh’s story of an incident that occurred one week into his stay in the West Bank illustrated the constant danger of this world. A boy was playing with a toy gun in his yard, and an Israeli soldier saw him and, feeling threatened, fatally shot him. The response to the shooting was minimal, and the boy was buried and counted as yet another unfortunate casualty. Al Ju’Beh was shocked at the normalcy of





such an atrocity in that community; he remembers that, in Jordan, when a child was accidentally run over, the entire country rallied in outrage. Yet, in the Palestinian territories, violence is so expected that it is hardly worth mentioning. “People are scared to be to hopeful [for peace] because they are afraid that if things aren’t fixed then they will be more disappointed than they were before,” Al Ju’Beh said.

Also contributing was sophomore Danny Newhide, the president of the Arab Student Association at Tufts. Newhide is a Lebanese-American who has spent much of his life in Lebanon, including some time during the Israeli-Lebanese war in 2006. The headlines of this winter, he said, felt like *déjà vu*. Bombs, rockets, innocent casualties—all were part of an all too familiar scheme of Middle Eastern war. Yet despite his loyalty to his home country and culture, Newhide sympathized with both sides. He sympathized with the Palestinians because he understood the terror of constant bombs raining down, and he commiserated with the Israelis because he knew the paralyzing fear of never knowing when a rocket or car bomb will claim another victim. When Newhide was younger and going to school in Lebanon, his parents feared for his life whenever he left for school. “People abroad think, oh, they’re at it again [in the Middle East], but this isn’t normal.” When he moved to the U.S., he realized it didn’t have to be an “us and them” mentality all the time. It was simply a matter of trust between people, which is understandably difficult to gain when loved ones are being killed and lives are filled with fear.

Though Newhide still felt bombs dropping even across an ocean, Shaheen Lavie-Rouse, who lived in Israel from age nine until he came back for college, often felt removed from the conflict even while he was in the midst of it. While living in Israel, he felt like the wars happened not to him, but to the country, the army, and the victims. The closest he came to feeling involved was when his city, Tel Aviv, was bombed during the Lebanon war and his house shook. Otherwise, he leads a normal life in Israel, though perhaps he might sit toward the back of a bus, further from a potential suicide bomber. He frequently attends anti-war rallies and did so this winter break in Israel. This time, it was a massive event, with hundreds of pro-war demonstrators, anti-war demonstrators,



and one American standing by a fence yelling “go back to Auschwitz!” “The whole conflict is really infantile; they bomb us, we bomb them, and so on,” he said. “I really hope someone grows up.”

Al Ju’Beh wondered aloud if it’s an innate human trait to hate. The rhetoric of hate is everywhere, he said: in mosques, in textbooks, and in government literature. It seems people hate Israelis, Palestinians or both just because they exist. But he feels that perhaps the tide is changing and perhaps people have begun to see the humanity of the other side.

Rabbi Jeff Summit attended the dialogue and sat listening carefully while waiting for his chance to share. He said that, in his many trips, he has found that people just want to live together in normalcy. “How can *normalcy* not be achieved?” he asked. Summit related a story from a leader of another period of war, the words of former Israeli Prime Minister Golde Meir. She said, “Maybe one day we will be able to forgive you for killing our children, but we will never forgive you for making us kill your children.” Summit understands from his observations that people are tired of fighting and long for peace. “We have to understand that our futures are bound together and that one side will never win at the expense of the other,” Summit emphasized. “We must rise together or else we’ll fall together.”

Not everyone in the Crane Room that night was Israeli, Palestinian, Jewish,

or Muslim. Asked what she would tell the Tufts community outside of this oasis of understanding, sophomore Kasey Mitchell said that though she’s an Irish Catholic American, she is not excluded from this bloodshed. “I make it my job to be aware [of what’s going on] as a citizen of the world and of humanity. We’re all at fault if we let one part of humanity die off. We have to spread the value of caring for others.”

That’s just what CAFÉ—Conversations, Action, Faith, and Education—a new student group founded to continue and expand upon the work of Pathways, aims to do. The group’s mission is to “[bring] students from all traditions, faiths, and beliefs together in a neutral environment that fosters dialogue, interaction, and mutual understanding.”

“Conversations like this should not be held only in a time of crisis, but at all times so that our communities can be linked and work together,” said Fuxman, moderating the end of the discussion.

Newhide jumped in, “People say it’s no use talking, you have to do something, but sitting down and talking is doing something. Other conflicts like this one have been solved with talking, and Israelis and Arabs are not so dissimilar. With a little more talking, this one could be solved too.”

As the speakers and guests filtered out of the room and back into the cold winter air, they had already begun to heed Newhide’s advice. ☺

# MALARIA TERROR

## SCIENTISTS BATTLE A TENACIOUS PARASITE

BY CARA PALEY

In the battle against malaria—the infectious and potentially lethal disease that has long caused global anxiety—scientists had seen a bright future with the discovery of a long-sought effective drug to destroy the dangerous parasite. However, hopes of obliterating malaria around the world have been stalled due to the discovery of early forms of drug resistance, leaving scientists in panic and heightening the threats of malaria all around the globe.

Caused by a parasite called plasmodium, malaria is transmitted through the bites of infected mosquitoes into the human body, where they multiply in the liver and severely infect red blood cells. While malaria most viciously plagues areas of Asia, Africa, and Central and South America, anyone traveling to an infected area is at risk for contracting the disease. Currently, according to the World Health Organization, more than 40% of the world's population lives in regions infected by malaria. It is through prompt and effective drug use that the painful threats of malaria can be countered. The most powerful drugs can triumph over plasmodium falciparum, the most serious of the four species of malaria, which can block blood vessels and cut off blood supply to vital organs necessary for survival if left untreated.

Before the shocking discovery of drug resistance, scientists had relied on combination treatments using Artemisinin—a drug derived from a plant used in traditional Chinese medicine. In the 1990s, Mefloquine, the American army drug, was combined with Artemisinin to produce quick and effective results and most notably used in the Cambodian region. Another effective combination mixes Arthemether, derived from Artemisinin, with Lumefantrine, another anti-malarial drug. This combination will be approved in the United States soon and is namely intended for both people traveling overseas and victims of malaria arriving in the country.

However, threads of drug resistance have been revealed in two cases around the Western Cambodian border, including one published in *The New England Journal of*

*Medicine*. In this area, the fast-acting drug that had consistently triumphed before is now losing its potency and taking longer to remove the malaria parasite from the bloodstream. Upon their discovery Artemisinin-based drugs took 48 hours to remove the dangerous parasite; now, they can take up to 120 hours.

Scientists fear that the early resistance shown to Artemisinin-based drugs will soon mirror the fleeting success of the drug Chloroquine, considered a miracle drug against malaria when it was developed in the 1950's. However, as the parasite developed and spread resistant strains, the drug that had once triumphed over malaria's deadliest form was rendered useless in many areas around the world. Although cases of resistance are still rare, scientists fear Artemisinin-based drugs will soon suffer the same fate.

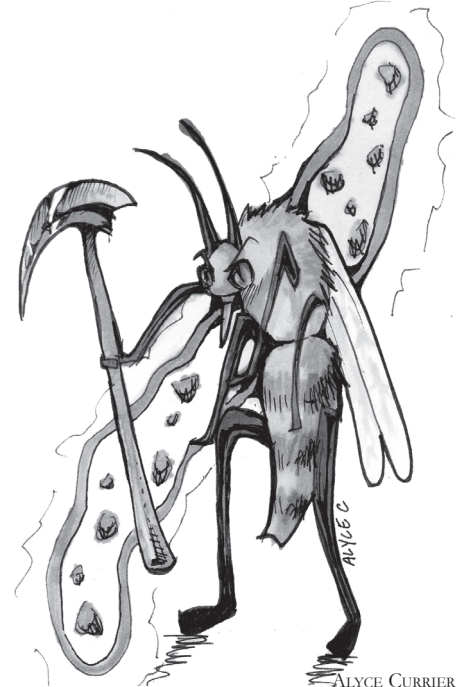
According to Professor Ross Feldberg of the Tufts Biology Department, drug resistance is a natural evolutionary process. Upon increased drug exposure, resistant strands in an organism's DNA will be selected, reproduce, and gradually dominate over non-resistant portions. While Chloroquine once effectively countered the parasite's harmful effects, resistant strands of malaria have now appeared, blocking Chloroquine from red blood cells and preventing it from breaking down hemoglobin. Since it took decades for Chloroquine resistance to spread around the world, scientists remain confident that Artemisinin-based drugs will continue to be effective for quite some time. However, while resistance will be slow, the looming fear is the absence of a new drug to take the place of Artemisinin-based combinations.

In efforts to counter Artemisinin resistance, global health authorities are taking action to slow the spread of resistant strains and prolong the drug's effectiveness by trying to ensure that Artemisinin is sold only as a combination pill with other medicines. The United States government, in approving a malaria monitoring center in Myanmar, is also encouraging preventative action. In addition, to help fund a containment program, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is giving \$14 million to Thai and Cambodian governments. Such a program, which in-

cludes efforts to supply infected areas with mosquito nets and visits by health-workers, lends strong support to the United States' efforts to counter malaria's strength.

Malaria still remains in the United States, even with all of the drugs to counteract its spread. However, according to the *New York Times*, the disease has remained rather unthreatening due to the country's wealth, along with modern housing, health-care access, and the use of insecticides. According to Professor Ross Feldberg, malaria has lost its potency in the United States due to efforts to remove the infected mosquito's presence, successfully achieved through the draining of wetlands and insecticide use. Unfortunately, third-world countries such as Cambodia lack the resources to administer such preventative measures. There, worsening economic conditions, along with a weak government and civil strife, have made it difficult to control malaria's spread.

Early cases of Artemisinin drug resistance have been rare, leaving scientists hopeful that such drugs will continue to triumph. While these combinations are losing their initial strength, they are still considered an effective cure for malaria. With re-surfacing threats of the stubborn parasite's resistance, scientists will undoubtedly continue in the endless battle against malaria. ☐



# THE PUBLIC EDITOR

*An introduction from Tufts' first public editor.*

BY JEREMY WHITE

How does journalism examine itself? How does an organization tasked with dispassionately relaying the world analyze its own shortcomings and oversights? How have I already broken a cardinal style rule by asking three rhetorical questions?

My name is Jeremy White, and I am Tufts' new Public Editor. I will work in this role to critique campus publications and to address the concerns of readers. My columns could criticize a certain publication's decision, laud it, or merely defend their right to make such a decision. Whatever the content of my pieces, I will hold myself to the same rules of accuracy and fairness that govern sound journalistic practice.

I would like to emphasize that I am not working for a single publication nor am I writing at the behest of the Media Advisory Board or the TCU Senate (although the latter two are responsible for creating the Public Editor position). I am an independent voice, and, as such, I will offer what I believe to be balanced analysis free from personal biases and stylistic preferences.

Journalism is not a science, and the process of putting out a newspaper, or a magazine, or a literary journal requires many omissions and prioritizations of value. These decisions are often unpopular, and factual errors frequently occur. But every article, every headline,

and every photo caption ends up on the page for a reason, and I will try to elucidate the motivations and necessities that translate a news meeting into a newspaper, a conversation into an editorial.

Newspapers and magazines are meant for consumption, and the sheer numbers of people (one hopes) who are reading campus publications generates a great range of opinions and reactions. Some of the criticisms campus publications face are valid and balanced, some are polemical, and some are just plain misinformed. I will treat them all in this column, hoping to put what happens on the front page of student media in the broader context of the obligations and processes that govern their creation.

Tufts' media landscape is staggeringly varied given the size of our school, divided by form, content, and target audience. We have a humor magazine, a daily newspaper, a weekly news magazine, several literary journals, and political publications that mirror the full extent of the ideological spectrum. There is a wealth of material available to students, and I will treat anything that is of concern to students, administrators, or arbiters of journalistic ethics.

No matter which publication you choose to read, they all play a part in magnifying the issues and events of importance to Tufts students. But there is no such thing as complete objectivity, so each publication ultimately offers a unique interpretation – the lens through

which an editorial board views the world. Trying to place campus media in this context and to explain the various approaches they take to encapsulating life as a Tufts student will hopefully help students reading my column understand the incredibly complex and dynamic process of reporting the news.

This is a tumultuous time for the news business. "Innovate or die" seems to be the maxim, as true for journalists as it is for Detroit auto executives whose industry is collapsing around them. Campus publications are relatively shielded from the exigencies of declining circulation and ad revenue, but the growth of new media – particularly websites and blogs – shows they are in touch with the spirit of the times. The advent of online journalism presents opportunities and pitfalls perhaps in equal measure and is already changing the way we produce and consume news.

The difficulty in my job is that I have deliberately removed myself from the masthead of the *Tufts Daily*, for which I used to write cover news. Simultaneously serving as the Public Editor for all campus media and writing for a specific campus publication represented an untenable conflict of interest, so I have bid farewell to the *Daily* (we had some good times). I am now in the same position as any student who picks up something to read before class starts: on the outside looking in, not part of the process that puts that newspaper or magazine or journal in your hands.

This is where you come in. If you have a specific complaint about an article, or a headline, or an editorial, let me know. If you don't like the way a certain publication operates, let me know. If you want to go on a general rant about Tufts media, let me know. I am here not only to offer my own critiques and insights but also to serve as a liaison between the student body and campus media. I know that every Tufts publication is constantly striving to be better, more responsive, and more accurate. Let's help them out. ☺

*You can read the Public Editor's columns and respond at <http://ase.tufts.edu/publiceditor>, and you can reach the Public Editor at [jeremybw1@gmail.com](mailto:jeremybw1@gmail.com) or at 301-807-7976.*

SOUND  
OFF:

# Phelps' Pot Predicament

Recently, photos emerged of Olympic Gold Medalist Michael Phelps smoking pot at a party at the University of South Carolina. Phelps has repeatedly apologized to fans and stated, "I engaged in behavior which was regrettable and demonstrated bad judgment... For this, I am sorry..." What standards should athletes be held to as role models? Do public figures have a greater obligation to behave legally, or should they be able to use their positions of power to make changes in public policy?

As photos of Michael Phelps smoking pot circled the web, I couldn't help but think, "Who cares?" Well, obviously there are two groups who care: those who want him hunted down by mobs with torches and pitchforks and those who want him to be the poster child for the legalization of marijuana. People are giving this controversy attention because Phelps is a hero, whether he wants to be or not. This is a guy who skipped his sex, drugs, and rock & roll phase of adolescence in order to win fourteen Olympic gold medals. Does that mean that he should be allowed to smoke pot when he's back to being the 23-year-old that we should all realize he is? Legally, no. But legally speaking, that didn't stop our new president or any of the other presidents down the smoking chain of command. Certainly I and more importantly, Phelps' sponsors, cannot ignore an illegal action. But if he wants to smoke and decrease his lung capacity in the process, then that's between him, his coaches, and his sponsors. We all like our heroes, and Phelps is the American golden boy. He smoked pot, so legally he needs to be punished. But in terms of us being outraged by his lack of role model instinct—I say give the guy a break.

- SUZANNE SCHLOSSBERG

I am deeply shocked and dismayed at Michael Phelps' conduct. This country is in the grips of an epidemic among its youth, and may suffer irreparable harm if role models like Mr. Phelps continue to set such a bad example. Let me be clear: eating 10,000 calories a day is reckless and irresponsible, and I hope Mr. Phelps will display remorse



for his egregious actions. Some may look at Mr. Phelps' training schedule and figure that he needs the nourishment. Others may hold up his achievements and say he's earned his indulgence. We must take action now if we are to protect this country from improper and imprudent gluttony.

Oh, yeah, and he probably shouldn't have smoked that pot either. But who cares about that?

-TAYLOR BATES

There has been a lot of huffing and puffing in the media about how regrettable Michael Phelps' actions were and how he can no longer be a role model to young impressionable swimmers. But really, with the exception of Kellogg's cereal, who stopped their sponsorship of Phelps, who cares? If one were to type "Michael Phelps Bong" into Google and poke around forums and message boards, the discussion is no longer predominately about the fact that Phelps took the hit. It is about the fact that with his massive lung capacity the hit would have been especially huge. Of all the Michael Phelps Facebook groups, the two fastest growing are: "I don't care that Michael Phelps smokes weed" and "I bet I can find a million people who don't care Michael Phelps smoked weed." In the broader picture, marijuana is estimated to be the largest cash crop in the United States in a widely cited study by Jon Gettman. Even the conservative Fox News published a story

citing a recent study that showed no correlation between cancer rates of non-marijuana smokers and heavy marijuana smokers.

So I'd say give this a couple months and no one will remember or care.

-ADRIAN WILLIAMSON

Athletes should be held as role models only as far as their contracts and endorsements are paying them to act as role models or as far as they choose to be role models. The tabloid media is blowing the situation way out of proportion and infringing on Phelps' right to privacy. Through this ugly and narrow-minded sensationalism, the career of a gifted athlete who achieved great things for his country is now being threatened. Public figures, like Phelps, should be allowed to define their own legacy, and we should only hold them socially responsible for the burdens that they openly claim to bear. Phelps never pronounced himself as the perfect role model. As far as I'm concerned, any legal action taken would be a farce and a publicity stunt. Let his endorsements do what they will. As long as he doesn't test positive during a competition period the man should keep swimming as long as he wants. ☺

-MICHAEL LEEPER

Want to share your opinions in the next "Sound off" section? E-mail Crystal.Bui@tufts.edu and Alexandra.Siegel@tufts.edu to be a part of our team.





*Aalok Kanani*

*Students from [EXPOSURE] capture the unique character of Boston in this recent collection of photos.*



*Aalok Kanani*



*Meredith Klein*



*James Choca*



*James Choca*





# Careful When You *Crank That*

BY CRYSTAL BUI

A familiar sound murmurs from within the walls of a house. Students walking along the street hear this faint but well-known noise. It's that song. The crowd of dancers, all swaying, mingling, and partying, recognize the beginning beats and instantly join in.

The lyrics are predictable, and the dance is simple. Excited, the crowd looks at the DJ satisfied—he just picked one of their favorite songs.

Soulja Boy's lyrics to "Crank Dat" are radiating through the speakers. As the crowd dances, they shamelessly sing along:

*Aim to clean off in this ho  
Watchmecrankit. Watchmeroll.  
Watch me crank that Roosevelt  
And super soak that ho [x10]  
Aim to fresh up in this bitch  
Watch me shuffle. Watch me jig  
Watchmecrankmysboulderwork  
Superman that bitch [x6]*

For those that are unfamiliar with this popular song, "Crank Dat" spent "seven weeks atop the Billboard Hot 100 chart in 2007 and was nominated for a Best Rap Song Grammy," according to Interscope Records. The debut album, *Souljaboytellem.com*, hit the Billboard Top 200 chart at number four in October, 2007 and became a pop-culture phenomenon, setting off a national dance craze and attracting millions of Soulja fans. The official "Crank Dat" music and instructional videos for the dance have logged over 50 million views on YouTube.

But it didn't end there. "Crank Dat" continued its fame at Tufts University. On Thursday January 29, 2009, the *Tufts Daily* featured a short piece titled, "Dances that Should be Revived at the Next Winter Bash." What was number nine? "Crank Dat" by Soulja Boy—same song, complete with the same misogynistic lyrics.

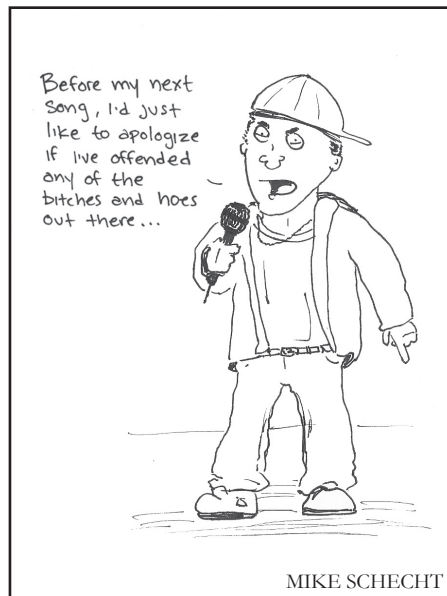
Excuse the graphic nature of the following description but be reminded that these lyrics were played over countless radio stations and listened to by millions.

Obviously, the song isn't about the

man who's faster than a speeding bullet and can leap tall buildings in a single bound. It's about a man "super-soaking" a woman with his bodily fluids if she, in-ferably, does not "put out."

For those still unclear or unfamiliar with the certain urban slang and derogatory terms laced throughout the song, let me elaborate. The "superman" is a sexual position in which the woman is laying on her stomach with her arms stretched out in front of her. Her state of mind—whether she is conscious, consenting, or aware of her surroundings—is undeclared, unaddressed, and apparently irrelevant in the song. Following the woman's docile and dormant "passed out" position, the man throws the bed sheets over her back and proceeds to "climax on," or "superman," her until the sheet sticks to her back, making her appear to be wearing a cape.

What's appalling is that "Crank Dat" is not only sung and danced to by innocent middle schoolers but by college students as well—individuals who pre-



sumably know better, understand more, and hold a proficient ability to analyze the meaning of such derogatory words. These are the same college students who hope that "Crank Dat" will be revived at the next Winter Bash.

Apparently to some, "it's just a catchy song," and that's fine as long as we forget

and ignore that the lyrics implicitly and explicitly advocate for the degradation of women.

We, as a culture and as a society, are surrounded by such lyrics that remain "just songs." Dr. Dre screams, "bitches ain't shit but ho's and tricks" because women, dare I even dream, cannot be anything more than prostitutes and cock-teases. Lil' Jon yells, "To the windows, to the walls, crawl you bitches, crawl" because apparently that's all I am permitted to do: bow my head and crawl beneath his feet.

That is what we listen to. These are popular lyrics. These are the songs we sing.

The issue is not only that current pop-culture songs allude to and depict completely misogynistic acts on "bitches" and "hos" (translation: women), but also that we, as humans, have become desensitized and indifferent to such words; we have lost sight of the importance of meaning.

This isn't anything new, but it's a recurring issue. These lyrics blatantly reveal the culture in which we live—what we categorize as "good" music and "popular" music. These lyrics expose what we are willing to accept. We hear, dance to, and remain unperturbed by or unaware of these lyrics and their violent disrespect.

Despite my rage, I am not advocating for censorship. I greatly value artistic license and believe in freedom of speech. However, I do recognize fame enables artists to have the ability and power to speak to younger generations through the words they sing and the beats they rap. Artists can persuade and impact the minds and lives of millions. This is not something that should be taken lightly.

I am advocating that, as part of an intellectual community, we become more aware of the actions we take, the songs we sing, and the overall meaning of our diction. Otherwise, we blindly sing and dance, having lost the ability to hear the music for what it is. By then, it is too late, and the song is over. ☹

*Crystal Bui is a freshman who will be majoring in English.*

# Save the Environment: ▶▶ Reduce ◀◀ Our Dependency

BY JIMMY PIANKA

Environmentalism has always suffered from the public's misconception that caring for our planet has to cost us money. We seem to resent the inconvenience of its message and dismiss its proponents as if they were nagging parents, ignoring the red flags as our short-term wealth consistently takes precedent over our long-term posterity. The situation has become critical, but, with a little creativity, the necessary action can be much more than a defensive scramble. Abandoning petroleum and adopting cleaner, domestically-produced sources of energy could single-handedly resolve more than one of America's largest problems through various economic opportunities.

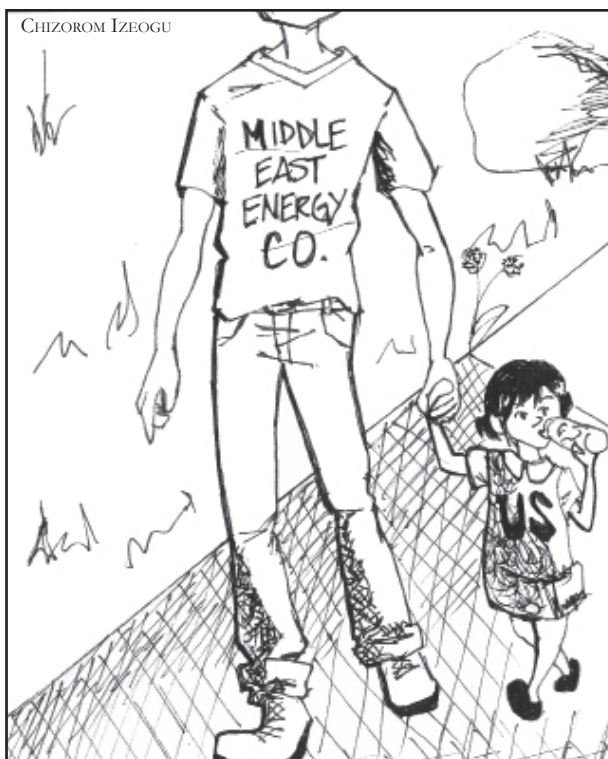
Ultimately, the long-term reduction of carbon emissions is a necessary step toward the responsible management of our planet, not to mention essential to our survival. We simply cannot afford to go about "business as usual" if we want to endure as a state for any considerable period of time—let alone as a species. There is no reason to think that this change will require too great a sacrifice. On a practical and pressing level, the transition itself could alleviate middle class woes by creating a tremendous number of jobs as new industries blossom. Additionally, extricating ourselves from the Middle East and the oil market as a whole would liberate our foreign policy by reducing our financial dependence on unfriendly governments. Finally, this process would allow us to reenter the infinitely lucrative energy market as producers, supplying the world with domestically-developed technology that saves the planet and fills our pockets in the process.

A government-supported alternative energy initiative in the private sector could do wonders for the dismal American economy. Restructuring our energy grid to incorporate new technology would lead to the growth of new companies seeking to profit from this vision, which would neces-

sitate a mass hiring of technicians, scientists, and skilled laborers for the tech's installation and management. President Obama has said that such an enterprise could create over 5 million new jobs, which, in light of a national unemployment rate of 7.2% at the end of December, could be a godsend. Shifting our energy production to domestic companies would keep wealth that we would have oth-

do well to avoid. Let us instead employ a more graceful tactic; as China and India develop, the quantity of oil they require will quickly reach ludicrous proportions, and the consequent economic and environmental strain will necessitate a familiar transition to cleaner energy. Conveniently for us, we will have already done the research and development, and American energy companies will suddenly find a nearly bottomless market for their products. As it stands, we are currently borrowing enormous sums from the Chinese in order to finance our oil purchases. This could have long-since ceased, evening out our imbalanced import/export relationship with its industries. China may be mighty, but its stature is equaled by its appetite. Thus the almighty dollar, long considered the greatest foe of environmentalism, will become the champion of its cause.

The question now is whether or not low oil prices will discourage us from sufficiently radical action. We've been scared into motion like this before, only to relax when the sky clears, but the warnings are becoming more frequent and harder to ignore as we draw closer to the precipice. The escalation of disastrous weather, ecosystem collapse, and disappearing resources should provide enough financial turbulence to promote the development of new fuels. Our challenge is to take sufficiently drastic action right now while our system is still relatively stable, rather than waiting for the executioner's axe to motivate us. For the moment, the alternative energy movement has momentum and a President at its back. If he has the wisdom and discipline to keep it moving forward, Obama might lead us to finally beginning to utilize the myriad "prime movers" that occur naturally all around us—the wind, the waves, and the star burning right above us. We get to save the species and make a fortune in the process. It's time to make the change. ☐



erwise sent abroad in American companies. Additionally, once the technology has been proven and made affordable, it will provide us with profitable products for export. It could lead to the rise of a new global industry, with its roots in our soil.

By extension, our relationships with the rest of the world have much to gain from energy independence. If we were to remove ourselves from the Middle Eastern oil market, we would put an end to the financial interest that leads us to shameful regime tinkering and inspires such profound hatred in the Arab world. Vacating the market may be prudent for other reasons as well, since oil reserves appear to be diminishing just as China and India are demanding ever-increasing amounts. An oil war with the Chinese is a conflict we would

---

*Jimmy Pianka is a Junior majoring in Cognitive & Brain Science and Philosophy and is the President of the Tufts Free Thought Society.*

# THE POWER OF THE POSTHUMOUS OSCAR

BY JORDAN TEICHER

When it comes to the Academy Awards, an Oscar-worthy acting performance is one where the actor disappears into his/her role. The tics and nuances of character have to be unlocked by the actor. Simply playing the part is not enough; they have to *become* the character for it to be truly great. Every year, there are great performances that exemplify outstanding acting, but rarely does a single role utterly crush all surrounding competition. This year, Heath Ledger's portrayal of the Joker in *The Dark Knight* did just that.

So on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009, after the host Hugh Jackman tells some bad jokes in his opening monologue and everyone is settled in their seats, it will come time for the Best Supporting Actor award. Ledger and his fellow nominees - Robert Downey Jr., Philip Seymour Hoffman, Josh Brolin, and Michael Shannon - will all get their share of applause. Then, barring a horrific mistake by the Academy, Ledger will win the award accompanied by a standing ovation. But, sadly, he will not be able to give an acceptance speech due to his untimely death by prescription drug overdose last January. And thus, something will happen that has not occurred in over thirty years. Ledger will receive the first posthumous acting Oscar (and second all-time) since Peter Finch won for his role as nutty newscaster Howard Beale in *Network* in 1976.

Although their circumstances are different (Ledger died at 28, and Finch, who was 60, died of a heart attack), their impacts are equally extraordinary. Finch was rightfully rewarded even though the Academy had never done this before. Prior to this, only James Dean, Spencer Tracy, and Jeanne Eagles were even nominated posthumously for acting categories. Since then, only two others have been nominated, neither received a gold statue. But Ledger should win and should justly be placed next to Finch in the history books come the end of February.

While Finch's award paid homage to a career that spanned five decades, Ledger's award would be validation that he was entering an elite class of actors. It poses the question: what if he was still here to do more? Anybody who watched him in *The Dark Knight* knows how awe-inspiring his talent was. It was frightening.



His role as the soft-spoken yet fierce Ennis del Mar in *Brokeback Mountain* showed the world he had the ability, but his turn as the Joker may be the best performance in any movie ever, rivaling Marlon Brando's Vito Corleone in *The Godfather* and Robert de Niro's Jake LaMotta in *Raging Bull*.

Yes, there was immense hype even

before the release of the movie because of his death, but that should not stand in the way of the Academy correctly honoring a true masterpiece. Ledger did not just stand out because of a purple suit or some grungy caked-on makeup; he immersed himself in the Joker. Even the character's subtleties never felt forced. The way Ledger's voice effortlessly changes pitch, the way he licks his lips, the way he laughs, or even the way he walks with his shoulders stiff and his head cocked to the side--everything about the character feels perfect. When individuals act, this level of commitment should always be present. This is the kind of acting that deserves to be rewarded.

What Ledger has done is even more astounding because he created such a dynamic and deep character in a superhero action movie. Not to take anything away from Finch, but *Network* was the stereotypical Academy drama movie and was nominated for all four acting awards as well as Best Picture and Best Director. Ledger's nomination for Best Supporting Actor is the only one granted to *The Dark Knight* in those six main categories, however unsatisfactory that may be. It goes to show that his acting went above and beyond a normal portrayal because he had to overcome the usual pitfalls that come with superhero movies during Oscar season.

It is unfortunate that he can no longer absorb himself into a role, but this singular great performance needs to be recognized no matter how unusual the conditions are. There were whispers after Finch's victory that his untimely death may have been a catalyst for his award. Ledger's performance, however, blows away his competition by such a large amount that he deserves it, dead or alive. So on that Sunday night, if Ledger's name is properly called out for the award, everyone should stand and applaud in recognition of one of the finest acting achievements of all time. ☺

*Jordan Teicher is a freshman who has not yet declared a major.*

Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Entertainment

## [DEBAUCHERY IN DISGUISE]

BY ALYCE CURRIER

• **Natural dis-getsomeass-ter:** Pick a terrible disaster that destroyed thousands of lives and depict it in the sexiest way possible. Nothing's hotter than utter peril.

• **History buffs:** While reading history books, do you ever find yourself oddly, uncontrollably attracted to historical figures like Peter the Great, Joan of Arc or Maximilien Robespierre? Of course you do. This party would enable everyone ever to fulfill a lifelong fantasy.

• **Sexy museum:** Dress as a well-known piece of art of your. Then be as pretentious as possible. Bonus points for interpretive dance in the style of your piece.

• **Sensual seniors:** Argyle. Shawls. Walkers. Dentures. Pill boxes. An equation for the rager of the century.

• **To Catch a Predator:** You arrive at the party ready to have a great time and maybe get some booty. Then Chris Hansen tells you that you are a repulsive sexual predator and you are arrested.

Theme parties are fantastic things. They take the party preparation process to an exciting new level—the awkward two hours before going out that might otherwise be spent in front of a mirror curling then straightening then curling your hair again (or the male equivalent) are instead spent rummaging through every absurd article of clothing you own trying to piece together a cohesive costume.

Tufts has seen a wide variety of costume parties, the best usually being thrown by theme houses, individual suites, or off-campus homes. Frats occasionally try, but the bottom line is that if you're showing enough cleavage, your costume doesn't matter—and besides, the dress code is usually something like "hoedown slut." That isn't my kind of costume party. If you're going to throw a costume party, the guests ought to be, well, in costume, and the theme should be more inspiring than "sexy skoolgurlz." Not that there's anything wrong with sexy costumes, those particular ideas are just much too easy.

Recently Tufts' best theme parties have included spring break 1999, sexy funeral, space porn, Internet jokes, and more. What could the future of Tufts theme parties hold? Here are a few ideas for the party planners of the Tufts community. (see side panel)

Tufts party people, this is a call to action. A call to break free from the mold of frat parties where tits transcend taste. A call to action to get all up in everybody's stuff in a fresh, exciting way—in costume! Wouldn't you rather dirty dance with Maximilien Robespierre than with some smelly boy with a beer gut who breathes heavily down your neck before running his slobbery tongue across your cheek in a gross attempt to get it into your mouth? Robez would never do that. Never.

Bottom line: if you want to make out with Max, stop complaining about having to actually wear a costume to a costume party! ☺

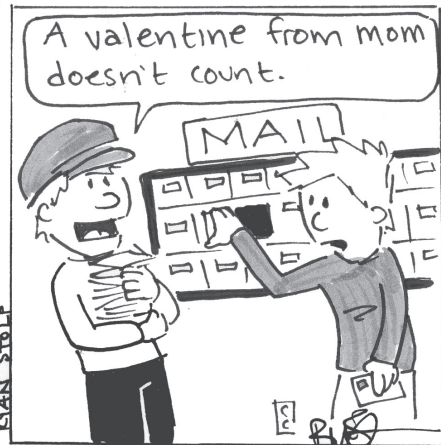
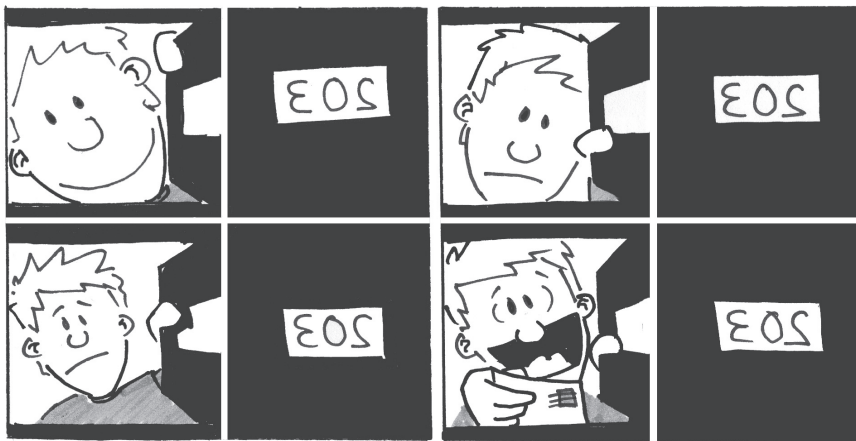
*Alyce Currier is a sophomore majoring in Sociology.*

## PLATNUM: "LOVE SHY" THE MOST IMPORTANT MUSIC VIDEO OF THE MODERN ERA

Welcome to a theater of interwoven themes, fancy footwork, and, of course, pop'n beats. In what is surely the most culturally relevant piece of multimedia to come out of Great Britain in years, "Love Shy," by the Bassline vocal trio Platnum (none of whom are here pictured) has "arrived." In one deft stroke of lighthearted melodrama and humorous caricaturization, Platnum has crystallized and glorified the image of the UK Bassline scene in our unfamiliar minds.

In order to properly grasp the high velocity plot of "Love Shy," one must view it at least twice. Disclosing the subtleties would ruin the fun, but know this—hidden beneath the docile, exterior plot involving an impromptu gathering of British street racing dancers in an abandoned (but suprisingly well-lit) warehouse breathes a complex web of plots and themes, including, but not limited to, the triumph of the geek, the fall and subsequent resurrection of an ego, respect for elders, and gender strife embodied in 2v2 dance-off, culminating in the irrefutable force and fun of the UK Bassline genre. — The Editors





How much marijuana do you consume during the average day, week, fortnight?

Describe your normal smoking circle.

How often do you purchase marijuana? What quantities, qualities, price, name?

How much of that is consumed by you? How much is sold?

If you do sell marijuana, why? How has it affected your lifestyle?

How has marijuana changed your social perceptions (hemp-wearing patchouli hippies, The Man, your parents high friends, the police)?

Are you a good-looking, interesting girl who enjoys the toke? If so, what's your number?



By SAGE MCCALLISTER

As my more devoted readers have probably deduced by now, “Reggie Hubbard” does not exist. Writing under the name of Lonny Reginald Hubbard allows me to tell the truth because I (the real, non-Reggie) cannot risk the possible downfalls of admitting to being a pothead and legalization advocate.

I understand that this sounds weak. I know I am not making myself available to confirm my stories, but for that I’ve created a new blog at [www.reggiehubbard.blogspot.com](http://www.reggiehubbard.blogspot.com) as a web-resource and aggregator of information about the drug war.

The birth of Google was the death of the ability to obliterate anything from one’s past. With a quick click, one’s personal information, writings, and history are thrust into the public eye. Friends over at the *Daily* have told me stories of alumni calling demanding that they remove an old article the alumnus wrote while they were more stoned than I am. While I am personally mostly comfortable with my cheeba cheifing, employers and other people who can affect the quality of my life may not be.

Additionally, just because marijuana should be legal does not mean personal use should be documented on the web for all to see. You wouldn’t want your professors to know your Keystone count, would you?

The most powerful weapon in the fight toward marijuana legalization is the truth. And we need it now more than ever.

Government agencies are spending comedic amounts of taxpayer money on an anti-marijuana campaign—billions of dollars spent on propaganda about the dangers of marijuana. Luckily, that is where I come in. I write my column to remind people that the good herb is everywhere and that continued action against it is futile.

## GOING GREEN

An Alternative Culture Column  
by Reggie Hubbard



Coincidentally, the web is the reason why legalization is imminent; it has opened up the channels of information through which the truth flows where once there was only propoganda. The web has the potential to grab people’s attention and open their minds, and that’s what I hope to do with Reggie.

But it is important that my readers remember—I am only one pot smoker. I cannot adequately comment on usage patterns on Tufts’ campus, much less the country as a whole. I couldn’t begin to comment on the breadth or depth of university kids getting lifted and splifted in order to show the failure of thirty years of drug war—not without hearing your stories. I want to extend my anonymity to you.

Any and all information that I get will never be shared in its raw form. Still, I don’t need your name, and if you are paranoid feel free to send the information to me ([reggiehubbard@gmail.com](mailto:reggiehubbard@gmail.com)) from an e-mail address similarly disassociated with your name.

My plan is to accurately describe the Tufts marijuana scene in economic and social terms—to offer a glimpse into the overall pot habits that define this campus.

Anyway, I’ll stop stalling. The questions are only guidelines. Include only what you’re comfortable with sharing. And like any good stoner circle, feel free to include any of your own stories.

I’m off to smoke a joint of something purple, I hope you can enjoy something nice too. ☺

-Reggie

# BITE-SIZED REVIEWS

*Next  
Stop:*

PORTER  
SQUARE



CAMPBELL, KLIEFOTH

*Every week, Excursions will bring you tasty nuggets about Boston's best dining, shopping, and exploration hotspots.*

COMPILED BY CHELSEA BROWN AND  
HANNA FREEDLUND

## **SIMON'S COFFEE SHOP** 1736 Massachusetts Ave.

There is something about 80s pop/trance music (or some horrible indie rendition thereof) that rubs me the wrong way on a Sunday morning. When I walked into

Simon's coffee shop, I was immediately enamored by the punchy colors of the walls—dark tangerine, magenta-plum, and mustard yellow—and the high ceilings covered with stamped tin designs. I was intrigued, too, by the layout of the shop. It's long and narrow with a dark wooden coffee bar to one side and small granite tables along the opposite wall. Because of the intimacy the shop offers, the squeals of the cappuccino machine and the clanking of the register were a tad intrusive. But that I can forgive—it comes with the coffeehouse territory. The loud music, however, was distracting to the extreme. While trying to enjoy my Mexican hot chocolate and chocolate croissant (both of which were

delicious), I found myself aching for some Corinne Bailey Rae or John Mayer. Bad music aside, Simon's is a chill little establishment with a moderate selection of pastries, freshly baked bagels, and a few different soups and sandwiches. It's a good place to bring your laptop and do some work. Just don't forget your headphones.

## **JOIE DE VIVRE** 1792 Massachusetts Ave.

For us college students, life passes at a fast clip. One day you are awkwardly sitting in your freshman advising class and the next you are on a senior pub-crawl with all of your best friends. Between internships, study abroad applications, bad break-ups, and getting vomited on at Winter Bash (or doing the vomiting), it is easy to lose sight of where drama and responsibilities end and where life begins. Nipping inside Joie de Vivre—an unassuming little store on Mass. Ave.—might help regain some lost perspective. Its name is its mantra; it is all about the little things that remind us of “the joy of living.” With items running the gamut of ridiculousness, from a rubber chicken purse to a clock made out of vintage forks and knives, you are bound to find a handful of items that you seriously hanker after and seriously do not need. This is where birthday presents come in. Joie de Vivre strikes the perfect balance of immaturity and loveliness in its merchandise; you can buy a bracelet, an elephant pencil sharpener, or a lava lamp depending on the personality of the gift recipient. The store's genius, though, lies in its cards. There are two walls



CHELSEA BROWN

lined with a huge selection, bearing clever witticisms, funny vintage pictures, beguiling animals, and so on. If you take a few minutes to read through some of them (that's right, slow down), it might just be long enough to absorb their whimsical wisdom. I ended up buying one that read, "Ever notice how 'what the hell' is always the right decision?" just because I didn't want to forget the quote. This store is really all about the full enjoyment of life, about reminding yourself that a day should be judged by how many times you laughed.

## NOMAD

1741 Massachusetts Ave.

Nomad, in a nutshell, is a Girltalk mashup of world cultures. Different kinds of artistry, ranging from Mexican to Nepali to Celtic, retain their separate identities but create a magnificent fusion when mixed together in one store. Nomad has all different kinds of jewelry, wall hangings, trinkets, books, rugs, lanterns, and other awesome ethnic items. Their collection of earrings is particularly divine and very reasonably priced. Nomad has all the appeal of a flea market, without the smell of feet. Their clothing is predominantly Free People, which is inherently over-priced. The pieces they chose though are of the type that makes you tilt your head as you try to think of who that cut would actually look good on. A robin's-egg-blue tapestry coat definitely boggled me. In general, they carry pieces that manage to look rumpled and chic at the same time. There is a downstairs as well where you can find beautiful Moroccan lanterns, Frida Kahlo paraphernalia, and colorful Indian textiles. Nomad is definitely a great place to find a present for your International Relations friend or just to have a look around and smell the incense.

## TIBET ARTS

1925 Massachusetts Ave, #A

Tibet Arts in Porter Square is one of those tiny boutiques that can suck a shopper in for a dangerously long time. Nestled between a pizza shop and a psychic center, this tiny store seems impossibly full of anything you could think of, from silk scarves and

hand-made jewelry to meditation CDs and Buddhist prayer flags. The front of the shop holds the most basic products, like beautiful Tibetan skirts. Most of these are reasonably priced, with jewelry ranging from about \$20 to \$200, scarves from \$15 to \$60, and clothes at about \$30 or \$40. The items on display at the front of the store are wonderful (I've acquired my share of ohm rings and richly colored silk scarves), but the back of the store contains its own world. A Buddhist's haven, the back of the store offers magnificent gold Buddha statues, colorful prayer flags, books, and CDs to help with meditation at any level of experience. The calming hum of monks chanting in the background and the exotic



smell of the constantly burning incense make any shopper want to curl up on a prayer pillow and get lost in a book of the Dalai Lama's teachings. The staff is just as warm and inviting as the products they sell. Kind and smiling, they are eager to help, explaining the meaning of symbolism or meditation bowls or helping shoppers pick out the perfectly-colored silk scarf. They are extremely gracious and were genuinely happy to help me make a purchase.

While it is located in a cool, bustling New England area, Tibet Arts does its best to transport customers to the alluring mysteries of the temples of Tibet.

## BIG FISH, LITTLE FISH

55 Elm Street

Located on Elm Street just a few blocks from Shaw's, Big Fish, Little Fish is a world

of its own. It is a tiny pet store that can be pretty easily overlooked on a trip to Porter. But if you're looking for a dorm-appropriate little friend, it's worth the trip. At first glance, the store can give you a bad impression. It's small, away from most of the hustle and bustle of Porter Square, and, honestly, it smells. But if you can look beyond its outward appearance, the place is pretty great. The man who owns the shop is an animal enthusiast and can give you any type of advice about your pet (I learned that goldfish have what is called a "happy fin" and if that fin is down, your fish is probably going to die, which is good to know). He carries birds, fish, lizards, and even tarantulas and scorpions. While I don't recommend the latter two, these small, easy-to-care-for critters are great dorm pets. My roommate and I are very happy with our newest goldfish addition. Prices are relatively low, and it's easy to barter. To top it all off, the shop's been around for decades-- my parents bought their first college pets at Big Fish, Little Fish, too!

## CHANGSHO

1712 Massachusetts Ave.

For those who crave Peking duck every once in a while, walking into Changsho is like walking into Willy Wonka's factory. Instead of chocolate, however, there are savory pieces of crispy duck and delicate slivers of cucumber everywhere. Better than

the vast majority of Chinese food available to Tufts students, this beautifully decorated and well-lit spot offers lots of seating so waiting is never an issue. Although known for its stellar Peking duck, Changsho also offers delicious chow fun (wide rice noodles) and steamed fish dishes. A full and satisfying meal tends to run about \$15 per person, more if you decide to order appetizers. I found that ordering entrées and sharing them family-style was the best way to go given the rather large portion size and dizzying amount of menu options. Sure, it's rather Americanized, but given our other options (Golden Light, anyone?), but it is a readily available and a rather tasty way to fulfill an MSG craving. ☺

*Want to contribute to the Observer Excursions' bite-size reviews? E-mail Crystal.Bui@tufts.edu or Kathryn.Christiansen@tufts.edu.*

# Montréal: Clubs, Bars, and Lots of Beer

## HOW TO ENJOY MONTRÉAL'S NIGHTLIFE WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK

BY KATIE CHRISTIANSEN

For those of us who think Boston winters are unbearable, Montréal offers a glimpse of what subzero temperatures really feel like—trust me, it's a lot worse than anything we have down here. NQR seems balmy in retrospect. Despite this minor discomfort, however, Montréal offers some of the best nightlife in Canada.

Let's start with a reality check: while clubbing and bar hopping can be lots of fun, the bills rack up quickly and inevitably drain our wallets. Never fear, fellow penny-pinchers—there are lots of ways to save some cash while hitting the town and, no, you won't have to give up having a good time.

One of the most effective ways to stay in the black when clubbing and barhopping is to look for drink specials. A few of the bars that we visited tended to cater to the McGill crowd on the weekends and thus offered some pretty fair deals on pitchers of beers or rounds of mixed drinks and shooters. Asking your waiter or bartender about what drink specials they are offering is a great way to save some money and maybe even try something new.

In your quest to stay solvent, you might just stumble upon some unexplored territory (Kamikazes, anyone?).

As it turns out, many of Canada's beers tend to be cheaper and taste much better than the traditional American college offerings. Brands such as Molson, Labatt, Rickard's, and Carling are all good choices. While the first two "marques" have a presence in the States, there are many varieties that are offered only in Canada, including a 10.1% alcohol Labatt beauty that not only tasted like garbage but was also just completely aw-

ful. Bad choices aside, Canadian beers offer many great alternatives to what we as college students are used to, a change that was welcomed with open arms and open mouths by my group of friends.

On the first night of our Canadian adventure, we were directed to what is supposedly one of Montréal's best nightclubs, Unity. Despite waiting in subzero temperatures for about an hour to get in, we quickly warmed up once we were granted admission to this hotspot. What we weren't told about, however, was that Unity

of the week. Since we were there on a long weekend, we decided to go out on Sunday night. The poor McGill students, however, didn't have Monday off like we did, so we decided to take it easy and do a little bar hopping. We began at the oddly named Bifteck, where we were lucky enough to snag a few tables. Despite it being a Sunday night, there was a fairly large crowd of adults who also seemed to be chilling out with friends. After enjoying the drink special of the night (a round of Kamikazes and a pitcher of Molson), we headed a few doors down to Frappe, where we shot a few rounds of pool



RICKARD'S



LILY GOLAN

caters to the gay and lesbian community as well as the general crowd of college-aged partygoers. No matter; it proved to be a fun night for all. My female friends found some coeds

to dance with, and my gay friends had a great time. My boyfriend and I thoroughly enjoyed ourselves just dancing and taking in the scene. Two pedestals in the middle of the dance floor provided room for lots of topless dancing by those who wanted to show off their pecs and, unfortunately, their muffin tops in the case of a few unfortunate souls. With a cover charge of only \$7 CAN, combined with the fact that we each only bought one drink at the bar, it was a pretty inexpensive night.

Of course, clubbing isn't for every night

and just relaxed and enjoyed ourselves. One of the easiest ways to save money while spending a weekend in another city is to stay with friends. Rather than spending about \$75 per person at a hotel, we all crashed on the floor of a friend of a friend's apartment at McGill. Sure it was cozy, but it was lots of fun and proved to be, well, a bonding experience for many. Since we don't all have friends in Canada, however, youth hostels are another great option that can be much more cost-effective than staying in a hotel. The Montréal Youth Hostel is very conveniently located with proximity to several Metro stations and Le Faubourg Ste-Catherine, which boasts tons of restaurants, bowling, shops, art galleries, and museums. If you go with ten or more people, the hostel offers great package deals.

When cabin fever starts to get you antsy and you feel the need to get the heck out of Dodge, just remember that Montréal is only a few hours and a few dollars away. ☺

*This is the second of a two-part installment on how to make the most of Montréal while on a budget.*



# German Chocolate Layer Cake

In the living room Mike sits in the dark  
Watching Ben-Hur through thick black-rimmed sunglasses.

It is Florida but there is no sunshine in this den.

Buba bakes her seven-layer cake;  
One day she will teach me how.

David, their son, is 48-years old.  
The only restaurant he will eat at is the Sweet Tomato,

but even there he will only touch the pudding.

He sits in the corner across from Mike.  
At first I don't see him there.

It is dark and he has gotten thin.

David's skin is as white as the ocean foam  
that curdles when it touches sand.

David doesn't like the beach.

—ROXIE SALAMON-ABRAMS



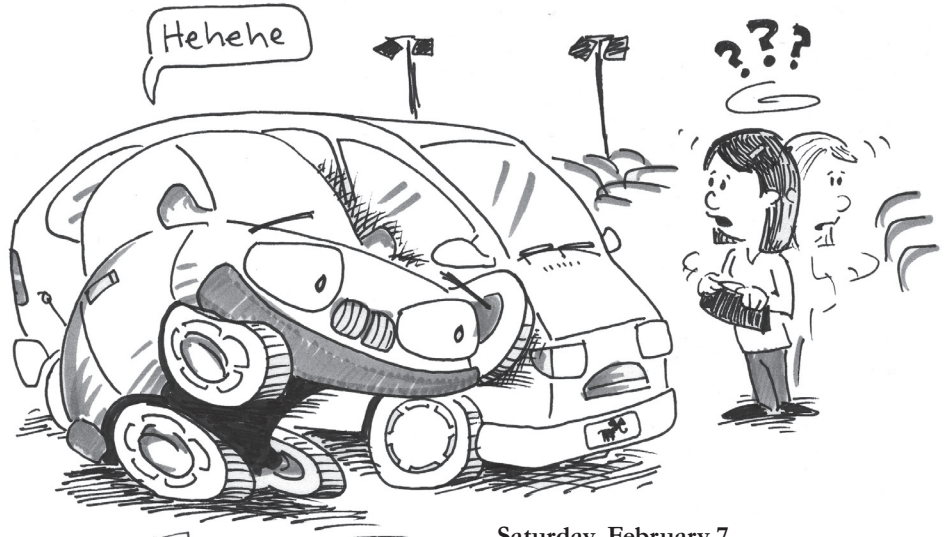
JEREMY GOULDER

# POLICE BLOTTER



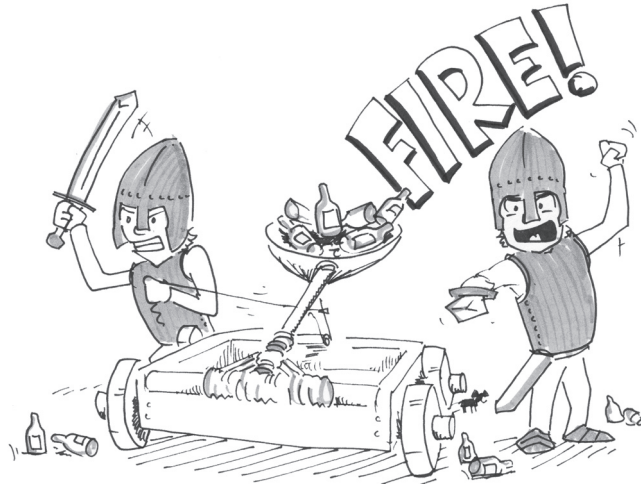
**Saturday, February 7**

At 1:40 a.m., a student reported a mysterious incident of a vanishing car. After parking the vehicle in the Carmichael-Wren parking lot around midnight, the student walked to a friend's house, at which point she realized that her keys were no longer in attendance. She returned to her car to search fruitlessly for them. Later she again returned to her car - or at least the space in which she had parked the car. It is suspected that the keys and car have eloped.



**Saturday, February 7**

At 10:03 p.m., TUPD was dispatched to 123 Packard Avenue to investigate a pre-Valentine's assault on a couple. The couple was strolling along the sidewalk when they arrived at a dense crowd. A polite, culturally pleasant request for a little strolling room soon escalated into an exchange of the similar culturally-prevalent, but much less polite "Fuck You!" The couple reached the corner of Talbot and Packard when a beer bottle fell from the sky and smashed at their feet. The thrower, of the previous "Fuck You" crowd, claimed he had dropped the bottle.



*"It landed 40 ft. away, so I don't know if it was windy, but..."*

*-Sergeant McCarthy*

**Thursday, February 5**

On Thursday, a student started off celebrating his 21st birthday and "ended up with his head in a bucket" while he waited to be transported to Somerville hospital.

**Sunday, February 8**

At 2:59 a.m., TUPD and TEMS joined a birthday celebration to find the birthday boy in bed with a large bowl.



*"I guess just a cake and ice cream isn't what they do for their birthday anymore."*

*-Sergeant McCarthy*

—Illustrated and Compiled by Ryan Stolp



# Tufts Observer

Since 1895

[www.tuftsobserver.org](http://www.tuftsobserver.org)

Tufts University  
P.O. Box 5302, Medford, MA, 02155

Please Recycle